



# CCM 2015 Testimony

900 CHAPEL STREET, 9th FLOOR, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510-2807 PHONE (203) 498-3000 FAX (203) 562-8314

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## ***LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE***

January 29, 2015

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 92% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate the opportunity to testify on bills of interest to towns and cities.

HB 5070 would require all municipal employers and municipal employee organizations engaged in mandatory binding arbitration to complete negotiations within one year from the date that binding arbitration was imposed by the state.

CCM has long advocated for the implementation of timelines related to grievance arbitration as a reasonable solution for making the process more manageable for both parties involved. To this end, CCM requests that the Committee amend HB 5070 by amending CGS § 31-98(a) and 31-107 to require that grievance arbitration and unfair labor practice awards be issued no later than 60 days following the date post-hearing briefs are filed. This would establish timelines for the issuance of decisions in cases before both the State Board of Mediation and Arbitration, and the State Board of Labor Relations.

Many municipal collective bargaining agreements call for arbitrating grievances before a panel of the State Board of Mediation and Arbitration (SBMA). Current statutes state that an arbitration decision shall be issued within 15 days. However, as a result of attorney general opinions and court rulings, this deadline was found to be only "directory" and not mandatory. As a result, management and unions can sometimes wait six months, and in a few egregious situations up to a year, to get a grievance arbitration award. **Such delays are unfair to an employee or group of employees whose grievance is in arbitration, and equally unfair to the union and management.** The delays are particularly harmful in cases where there may be back pay liability, such as a case involving termination or suspension.

CCM urges the Committee to amend HB 5070, as recommended above, and to favorably report the bill.

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If you have any questions, please contact Bob Labanara, State Relations Manager, CCM at [rlabanara@ccm-ct.org](mailto:rlabanara@ccm-ct.org) or (203) 498-3023.